

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action mailed December 13, 2006, the Examiner objected to the drawings, and in particular, Figure 3. The Examiner rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hardy et al. (USP 6,876,199 – hereinafter Hardy).

The Examiner objected to the drawings and asserted that “Figure 3 should be designated by a legend such as -- Prior Art -- because only that which is old is illustrated.” *Office Action*, 12/13/06, pg. 3. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Figure 3 shows a reconstructed axial bilateral breast phantom image having a fractional FOV in the readout direction. *See Specification*, ¶[0029]. An embodiment of the present convention is directed to MR data acquisition with fractional readout FOV. *See Specification*, ¶[0027]. Claims 1-22 call for, in part, an FOV to be smaller in one direction/dimension than another. As such, Figure 3 does not illustrate “only that which is old.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner’s objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hardy. Applicant has amended claims 1, 9, and 15 to incorporate the subject matter of claims 2, 11, and 16, respectively. In addition, Applicant has canceled claims 2, 11, and 16. Applicant has also amended claims 21 and 22 to call for, in part, truncating an FOV in a frequency encoding direction along an anterior/posterior axis extending through a subject to be scanned such that the FOV is larger in a phase encoding direction than the frequency encoding direction.

With regard to the subject matter incorporated into claims 1, 9, and 15, the Examiner stated that “Hardy discloses the [sic] computer is further programmed to define the FOV such that the frequency encode direction extends parallel to an anterior/posterior axis extending through the bore (Column 4, lines 46-66).” *Office Action*, 12/13/06, pg. 3. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Hardy discloses a receiver coil array that “has a plurality of receiver elements arranged in rows and, during application of a readout gradient in a frequency encoding direction, shifting receiver frequencies by a selectable amount for each row of the array in order to shift a limited field of view (FOV) in the frequency encoding direction.” *Abstract*. Hardy discloses that the “RF receiver array 190 is constructed with a 4 rows of 4 coils or receiver elements 210 aligned in the left/right (LR) and superior/inferior (SI) directions. . . .” *Col. 4, lines 47-50*. Hardy further states that a 4x4 array is “positioned below the subject (posterior sub-assembly) and another identical assembly above (anterior sub-assembly, only one is shown), for a total of 32 elements.” *Col. 4, lns. 51-54*. However, while Hardy may disclose positioning an RF receiver coil

posteriorly below a subject and positioning another RF receiver coil anteriorly above the subject, Hardy fails to teach or suggest that a frequency encode direction extends parallel to an anterior/posterior axis extending through a bore/patient. In fact, Hardy teaches the frequency encoding direction to be in a superior/inferior direction while the phase encoding direction is in a left/right direction. *Col. 6, lns. 1-8*. Since Hardy teaches that the frequency encoding direction is in a superior/inferior direction and since claims 1, 9, and 15 call for, in part, the frequency encoding direction/dimension parallel to an anterior/posterior axis extending through a bore/patient, Hardy fails to anticipate claims 1, 9, and 15.

Amended claims 21 and 22, calling for, in part, truncation of an FOV in a frequency encoding direction along an anterior/posterior axis extending through a subject to be scanned, is similarly not taught or suggested in Hardy. As explained above, Hardy discloses a frequency encoding direction in a superior/inferior direction instead of in an anterior/posterior direction as called for in claims 21 and 22.

Accordingly, that which is called for in claims 1, 9, 15, 21, and 22 is not shown, disclosed, taught, or suggested in the art of record. As such, Applicant believes claims 1, 9, 15, 21, and 22, and the claims which depend therefrom, are patentably distinct from the art of record.

Therefore, in light of at least the foregoing, Applicant respectfully believes that the present application is in condition for allowance. As a result, Applicant respectfully requests timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance for claims 1, 3-10, 12-15, and 17-22.

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's consideration of these Amendments and Remarks and cordially invites the Examiner to call the undersigned, should the Examiner consider any matters unresolved.

Respectfully submitted,

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